

Senator Frist must not give legitimacy to those who claim they hold a monopoly on faith. They do not. They assert, in the words of Tony Perkins, president of the Family Research Council and organizer of the telecast, that there is a vast conspiracy by the courts "to rob us of our Christian heritage and our religious freedoms." There is no such conspiracy. They have been unable to ram through the most extreme of the President's nominees, and now they are spinning new claims out of thin air.

Alas, this is not an isolated incident. This past week, the Christian Coalition convened a conference in Washington entitled, "Confronting the Judicial War on Faith." Their special guest speaker was the House Majority Leader, Rep. Tom DeLay. When leaders of the Republican Party lend their imprimatur to such outrageous claims, including, at the conference, calls for mass impeachment of Federal Judges, it should be of deep concern to all who care about religion. It should also be of concern to President Bush whose silence, in the wake of the claims made both at the conference in Washington and in the upcoming telecast, is alarming.

The telecast is scheduled to take place on the second night of the Passover holiday, when Jews around the world gather together to celebrate our religious freedom. It was in part for exactly such freedom that we fled Egypt. It was in part for exactly such freedom that so many of us came to this great land. And it is in very large part because of exactly such freedom that we and our neighbors here have built a nation uniquely welcoming to people of faith—of all faiths. We believe Senator Frist knows these things as well. His association with the scheduled telecast is, in a word, shameful. We call upon him to disassociate himself from the claim that the Senate is participating in a filibuster against faith, and to withdraw his participation from April 24th event.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Utah is recognized.

Mr. BENNETT. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BENNETT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

90TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, today, as in previous years, I would like to honor the memory of the victims of the Armenian genocide. This year marks the 90th anniversary of the brutal campaign to eliminate Armenians from the Turkish Ottoman Empire.

April 24 was chosen as the day of remembrance because on that date in 1915, more than 5,000 Armenians including civic leaders, intellectuals, writers, priests, scientists, and doctors were systematically rounded up and murdered. The systematic and intentional killing continued until 1923, leaving nearly 1.5 million Armenians dead.

There are those who attempt to deny that this atrocity ever occurred. But

there is no denying the overwhelming historical record and eyewitness accounts that documented the appalling events of 1915–23, which occurred during the time of the Ottoman Empire. The United States Ambassador to the Ottoman Empire, Henry Morgenthau, stated at the time that "When the Turkish authorities gave the orders for these deportations, they were merely giving the death warrant to a whole race; they understood this well, and, in their conversations with me, they made no particular attempt to conceal the fact . . . I am confident that the whole history of the human race contains no such horrible episode as this."

The annual remembrance of the Armenian genocide is not a condemnation of our ally, the present day Republic of Turkey. But, our mutual interest with our NATO partner and our friendship with, and respect for, the Turkish people are not reasons to ignore historical fact. Nobel Laureate writer Elie Wiesel has said that the denial of genocide constitutes a "double killing" for it seeks to rewrite history by absolving the perpetrators of violence while ignoring the suffering of the victims.

During my time in the Senate, I have spoken about the Armenian Genocide many times. It is important that we take time to remember and honor the victims, and pay respect to the survivors who are still with us. In addition, we must reaffirm our commitment to ensuring that history is not repeated. This is the highest tribute we can pay to the victims of any genocide.

Mr. President, I urge my colleagues to honor the memory of the 1.5 million Armenian genocide victims by recognizing that there are still those in the world who will stop at nothing to perpetuate campaigns of hate, intolerance, and unthinkable violence. We must do all we can to stop atrocities, like those in the Darfur region of Sudan, from occurring as well as continue to provide adequate recovery aid to survivors. In doing so, we will truly honor the memory of genocide victims and fulfill our responsibilities as a world leader.

Mr. SARBANES. Mr. President, I rise to commemorate the 90th anniversary of the Armenian genocide, the first genocide of the 20th century. One and a half million men, women, and children lost their lives as a result of the violent massacres and extensive deportation carried out by the Ottoman Turkish rulers against their Armenian citizens. Today, as we remember the bravery and sacrifice of the Armenian people in the face of great suffering, we renew our commitment to protecting the fundamental rights and freedoms of all humanity.

Nine decades have passed since the terrible blows that befell the Armenian people in 1915. On April 24 of that year, more than 250 Armenian intellectuals and civic leaders in Constantinople were rounded up and killed, in what was the first step in a systematic plan to exterminate the Armenian popu-

lation in the Ottoman Empire. After the round-up, Armenian soldiers serving in the Ottoman army were segregated into labor battalions and brutally murdered. In towns and villages across Anatolia, Armenian leaders were arrested and killed. Finally, the remaining Armenian population, women, children, and the elderly, were driven from their homes and deported to the Syrian Desert.

In reality, "deportation" was merely a euphemism for death marches. Ottoman Turkish soldiers allowed brigands and released convicts to kill and rape the deportees at will; often the soldiers themselves participated in the attacks. Driven into the desert without food and water, weakened by the long march, hundreds of thousands of Armenians succumbed to starvation. In areas of Anatolia where deportation was not deemed practicable, other vicious actions were undertaken. In the towns along the Black Sea coast, for example, thousands of Armenians were packed on boats and drowned.

The efforts to annihilate the Armenian population were well documented in first-hand accounts, press reports, and other testimony. Henry Morgenthau, the U.S. Ambassador to Turkey at the time, personally made vigorous appeals to stop the genocide, calling it "a campaign of race extermination" and "the greatest horror in history". Leslie Davis, a U.S. diplomat stationed in eastern Anatolia, had a similar account, writing once to the State Department, "it has been no secret that the plan was to destroy the Armenian race as a race, but the methods used have been more cold-blooded and barbarous, if not more effective, than I had at first supposed." Even Germany, Ottoman Turkey's own ally, condemned the Turkish "acts of horror."

Despite the testimony from U.S. diplomats who were witness to the events and the abundance of credible, international evidence documenting the Armenian genocide, there are still those who refuse to acknowledge its occurrence. To anyone who doubts this brutal history, I would recommend a visit to the National Archives, where much of the evidence collected by our diplomats, along with survivors' accounts, are stored.

I do not deny that coming to terms with history is a difficult and painful process, as those who lived in South Africa and the countries of the former Soviet bloc can tell us. But the challenge of acceptance does not justify the distortion of truth. Falsifying history insults the memory of those who suffered and threatens our very understanding of justice and humanity.

We have a national interest in seeking that our foreign policy is grounded in the same principles on which this Nation was founded, a respect for the truth, the rule of law, and democratic institutions. Clearly, this was in part the administration's motivation for its recognition last fall of the genocide in Darfur. In his testimony before the

Foreign Relations Committee on September 9, Secretary Powell declared that "the evidence corroborates the specific intent of the perpetrators to destroy 'a group in whole or in part.'" This begs the question: if Darfur, why not Armenia? Did the Ottomans not seek to destroy the Armenians to this same extent?

Although Americans of Armenian origin, many of whom came to this country fleeing persecution and looking to rebuild, make up a relatively small community among the multitudes that comprise our Nation, they have enriched our national life beyond proportion to their numbers, in the arts and sciences, in medicine, in business, and in the daily life of communities across the Nation. I support Americans of Armenian origin in calling for recognition of the genocide committed against their relatives 90 years and just a few generations ago. In recognizing this tragedy, we reinforce our commitment to building a world in which history will not repeat itself.

SENATOR GAYLORD NELSON AND EARTH DAY

Mr. KOHL. Mr. President, today I rise to recognize one of our most prominent Wisconsinites, Gaylord Nelson, the founder of Earth Day—and a man who was a driving force for the way the American people and the world view the environment and environmental conservation.

Gaylord Nelson was truly a pioneer who had the vision of starting a national day to protect and celebrate our environment when it was not politically popular. What started out as an idea in the early 1960s blossomed into a national day of observance with an estimated 20 million demonstrators participating in the first Earth Day in 1970. Today there will be an estimated 500 million people in 167 countries taking part in Earth Day.

All over the country, Americans heard about the dangers of lead in our water and air, pesticides in our drinking water, and chemicals in our soil. An informed public brought pressure on Congress and the President to act. The movement that started that first Earth Day led to the Clean Air Act, the Clean Water Act, the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, and Superfund legislation. These are the foundation of our environmental law today, and they would not have been possible without the work and vision of Senator Gaylord Nelson.

Senator Nelson entered public service in 1948, after serving 4 years in the military during World War II. He served as a Wisconsin State senator, Governor, and then as a U.S. Senator for 18 years. As Governor, he was known for conservation efforts and preserving wetlands long before those causes became popular nationally. As a Senator, he built on his environmentalist reputation to further issues including the preservation of the Appa-

lachian Trail corridor and the creation of the national trail system.

Earth Day also reminds us that we need to work internationally. We need to engage developing economies like China, India, and Russia to head off major environmental disasters. We are not on this planet alone, and we can no longer pretend that environmental damage around the globe does not come back to haunt us. Senator Nelson understood that lesson almost 40 years ago, and he has been teaching it to the rest of us ever since.

The ideas of Gaylord Nelson are just as important today as they were 35 years ago. The progress that followed in the wake of the first Earth Day must not be forgotten. As a nation and as neighbors in the world we must continue to demand for higher accountability and higher environmental standards. Today is a reminder for all people to recommit themselves to environmental stewardship and to thank Gaylord Nelson for focusing us on how we impact the environment that sustains us—and the legacy we owe to the generations that follow us.

"GENTLEMAN" JIM JEFFORDS

Mr. LAUTENBERG. Mr. President, I rise to pay tribute to our friend and colleague from Vermont, JIM JEFFORDS, who announced on Wednesday that he will not seek re-election to a fourth term in the Senate in 2006.

If anyone has earned the right to retire from politics, it is JIM JEFFORDS. JIM began his public service in 1956, when he was just 22. He joined the Navy and served on active duty until 1959, when he entered Harvard Law School. He was elected to the Vermont State Senate in 1966, nearly 40 years ago. Two years later, he was elected State attorney general, and he served in that capacity until 1973.

He was elected to the United States House of Representatives in 1974. I think that was a testament to the respect and affection that Vermonters have for JIM. As my colleagues may recall, 1974 was a pretty tough year for Republicans to get elected.

JIM served in the House for 14 years, distinguishing himself on the Agriculture Committee and the Education and Labor Committee. He showed his fiercely independent streak in 1981 when he was the lone House Republican to vote against President Reagan's tax cuts that caused budget deficits to explode.

In 1988, JIM was elected to the Senate, replacing another esteemed Vermont Republican, former Senator Robert Stafford. In three terms in the Senate, JIM has chaired the Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee and the Environment and Public Works Committee.

It is customary for Members of Congress to focus on a few issues during their career. JIM is unusual because he has significant accomplishments in so many areas.

Over the course of his 30-year career in Congress, JIM has had an enormous impact on every education and job training bill, including the elementary and secondary education and the higher education reauthorization bills and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, IDEA; every farm bill; the Northeast Interstate Dairy Compact; and every environmental protection bill, including the landmark 1990 Clean Air Act amendments that established the "cap and trade" program for sulfur dioxide that has done so much to reduce acid rain in our part of the country. JIM has also been one of the staunchest and most effective advocates for the arts, humanities, libraries, and museums. And he has been a tireless champion of the women, infants and children, WIC, nutrition program.

Back home in his beloved Vermont, he is known as "Gentleman Jim." And he is a gentleman, one of the most decent and thoughtful Members ever to have served in the Senate.

Because he is so soft-spoken and moderate, people underestimate him. Or at least they did, until he decided that President Bush and the Republican majorities in Congress were taking our country in the wrong direction.

I know that leaving the Republican Party and becoming an Independent was one of the toughest decisions JIM has ever made. But he believed it was the right thing to do, so he did it, with his characteristic humility and without any rancor.

The Senate will be a poorer place without JIM JEFFORDS' expertise and civility. But as I said a moment ago, if anyone has earned the right to retire, it is JIM JEFFORDS.

I know he wants to get back to Vermont and help his wife Liz battle cancer. Liz lost her sister recently, and their son-in-law will be deployed to Iraq soon. So JIM and Liz and their family are especially in our thoughts and prayers right now.

We will miss JIM JEFFORDS, but history will mark his heroism and his enormous contribution to life in America. For that, we are eternally grateful.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

RECOGNITION OF DARLEEN HORTON

● Mr. BUNNING. Mr. President, I speak today in honor of Darleen Horton, a teacher at Chenoweth Elementary in Louisville, KY. Ms. Horton was recently selected by President Bush to receive the Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching. Ms. Horton was chosen based on her passion for her subjects and her dedication to her students.

The Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching identifies outstanding mathematics and science teachers in all 50 States, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the U.S. Territories and the